7: Linton E-5 (1920-1921) 1923 OX6 Marquesas OX6

From the point of view of the primitive settler, the Marquesas could hardly be considered desirable country. The mountains everywhere extend to the sea, and the little level ground on the plateaus is rendered uninhabitable by the droughts. The numerous valleys are for the most part small and many of them contain no land suitable for cultivation. Terracing, which might have increased the arable area, is almost useless without some system of irrigation, and this is rendered impossible by the uncertain rainfall. There are no native wild animals larger than the rat, and the absence of a barrier reef decreases the supply of fish, and makes fishing arduous and uncertain. Opposed to these disadvantages are a climate ideally suited to the growth of breadfruit and coconut, and at least partial immunity from attack as a result of the geographical isolation of the valleys.

SETTLEMENT AND POPULATION

So far as known there are no native accounts of the original settlement of the Marquesas. The legends collected by the Bayard Dominick Expedition show a belief in a local creation. Legendary material and the constant repetition of tribal and place names in the various islands of the group would seem to indicate that the historic inhabitants were descended from a few small parties of settlers who occupied the most fertile valleys of the southern islands first, spreading as their numbers increased until the occupation of the group was complete. There is no legendary evidence of organized conquest or of an early non-Polynesian population. The local differences in culture and physical type which existed in the Marquesas at the beginning of the historic period seem to point, however, to the presence of two originally distinct racial elements. One element, which was dominant in Hiva Oa, Tahu Ata and Fatu Hiva, showed many affinities with the Maori of New Zealand. The other element, which was dominant in Nuku Hiva, Ua Huka and Ua Pou, showed affinities with western Polynesia. It seems improbable that these two elements arrived in the group simultaneously but it is imposible to say which came first. In historic times the western Polynesian element in the Marquesas was strongest in the localities which were least desirable and farthest from the probable place of arrival of immigrants to the group. This may indicate that this element arrived first and had been ousted from the more favorable localities by the Maori-like element.

There seems to have been no important invasion of the Marquesas after their settlement by these two racial elements. The Tuamotus was the only island group near enough to serve as a base for organized attack and these islands were small and sparsely populated. It was not impossible for small bands of invaders to reach the Marquesas from time to time; but even if they were successful in this, the nature of the country would have limited their occupation

/74 cont./ 186
white ethnic groups. This is a culture contact phenomonon, 515
arising from the need of the natives to act out their animosity 648
toward the European intruders. As few white visitors ever learn [154]
more than a few words of the native language, it is quite safe for the natives to refer to white visitors by terms such as those listed above. I have seen Marquesans return the greetings of French and American tourists with such appellations, displaying perfect poker faces all the while. Much is made of "lax" European bathing habits; to escape disapprobation, one must bathe as frequently and as thoroughly as the Marquesans and be extremely careful of perspiration odor.

Skin eruptions are very common among the Marquesans, 164
providing a further source for terms of insult. Some of the 192
most common are: 578

/75/ puna — an eruption characterized by itching and peeling of the skin, often in the groin, but found on the rest of the body as well (also known as Sekaseka or senga senga - Samoan?)

tane' — an eruption characterized by slight depigmentation, arising in spots and spreading over large areas

mama — an eruption characterized by numerous small round hard blisters developing on the lower legs and ankles, resembling in their appearance and order the chitons (mama) which appear on the rocks along [136] ●
the shore.

All these diseases are considered quite contagious (rere), 169
especially as a result of sexual intercourse. References are 578
commonly made to a newly developed skin condition as having [833]
come from a particular sexual episode. Those whose mates [763]
or lovers are afflicted with any of these diseases are subjected to severe ridicule at times, as the diseases, although common, are thought to be somewhat distasteful.

Conspicuously absent in the Marquesan obscene vocabu- 192
lary are references to female relatives of the addressed. Having 602
831